

STATIONS
OF THE
CROSS FOR
TODAY'S
DISCIPLES

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OPENING PRAYER.

Jesus is the message that sustains us on our journey of redemption. We reflect on his extraordinary vision of the mystery of God as the Source of all life. In spite of failure, condemnation, and death, Jesus remained faithful. We pray that we will grow in understanding how we are to be the body of Christ in our world.

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If you are using this station booklet in your parish or with a small group, you may want to sing a refrain such as *Jesus, remember me when...* as the leader or group moves to the next station.

1 Jesus is
condemned
to death

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STATION ONE

JESUS SPEAKS

Mindful of the God alive in me, I tremble at Pilate's words. How did I come to this place of utter failure? I know that God is here present, even at this awful moment of condemnation. I want to escape but I know that is not possible.

I weep for all who are sentenced to die: the baby whose mother chooses abortion; the soldiers, mothers, fathers, and children when governments choose war; the guilty and the innocent when the state chooses the death penalty.

WE PRAY

Grateful for those who have the courage to choose life in all circumstances, we remember that we live in God. We invite the Spirit to guide our decisions and challenge our hearts.

(In silence, pray for those who challenge you to choose life.) ☸

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2 Jesus
carries
his cross

STATION TWO

JESUS SPEAKS

Life has tested me in many ways. I feel my strength being drained from me. I am not sure I can continue. I know the pain of losing my friends. I mourn for those who know weakness and ill health, and the sadness of loneliness and old age.

Too often people blame my God for their sufferings; they think that the God who loves them also sends them crosses to bear; they fail to see that my God, our God, is here with us, embracing us and helping us grow.

WE PRAY

Remembering the Sacred Presence, we believe even though we do not see. We carry our burdens trusting that the Divine Breath within gives us power and strength.

(In silence, pray for those who are carrying heavy burdens at this time.) ☸

3 Jesus falls the first time

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STATION THREE

JESUS SPEAKS

I tried so hard to continue, but I could not go on. My heart is broken; I had failed to convince people that God loved them. I understand when disappointment and frustration disturb your soul. I understand why you feel like quitting.

Remember that you live and move in God; whenever you feel defeated, I am with you. I will raise you up and we will continue our journey together.

WE PRAY

Inspired by Jesus who trusted in God even when he was crushed by misunderstanding and disbelief, we commit ourselves to remain faithful to the dreams and hopes of the Spirit for our world.

(In silence, pray for those who are suffering failure, defeat, misunderstanding, or disappointment.) ☸

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4 Jesus
meets his
afflicted
mother

STATION FOUR

JESUS SPEAKS

I can barely look into the agonized eyes of my Mother. I do not want her to see me this way. I know she desires to take my place. Loving and being loved brings suffering to both of us yet we would not have it any other way.

That's how I love you, too. I am with you when you cry, when you are in pain, when you feel helpless.

WE PRAY

Because Jesus suffered, we know that as his followers we will not be spared. We pray that his companionship and example will strengthen us as we walk with those we love.

(In silence, pray for those you love who are suffering pain or loss.) ☸

5 Simon
helps Jesus
carry his
cross

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STATION FIVE

JESUS SPEAKS

I notice that Simon is being coerced into helping me; nevertheless, I am grateful. As I struggle to continue walking, I notice that his attitude begins to change. My cross seems to become lighter and I realize that it is because of his effort to carry more of it.

When you are not enthusiastic about helping others, I want you to remember that I appreciate the smallest gesture of kindness. I hope that like Simon, you will discover that service, no matter how minimal, will produce a new joy within you.

WE PRAY

Recalling how Simon became a consoling support for Jesus, we are mindful of the gift we can be to others. We marvel that even in our weakest moments, we can be a treasure for someone.

(In silence, pray for those who serve others, especially those who sacrifice their own comfort to do so.) ⚙

6 Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

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STATION SIX

JESUS SPEAKS

I see the brave Veronica break away from the crowd and come toward me with her towel. She does not care about the whispers or the disapproving stares. I see tears in her eyes as she lifts the towel to my face.

I praise your compassion whenever you respond to the suffering around you. I congratulate you when you are strong against those who try to pressure you to abandon your conscience in order to give in to the popular or majority opinion. I applaud you when you stand for truth even if you must stand alone.

WE PRAY

We give thanks for those women and men who have been examples of courage when all around them have tried to convince them to compromise their beliefs. We are sorry for the times we have given in to our fears.

(In silence, pray for those who do the right thing trusting that their actions will make visible the reign of God.) ☸

7

Jesus falls
the second
time

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STATION SEVEN

JESUS SPEAKS

As I fall again I am tormented by my failure.
Where did I go wrong? Why was I betrayed by
one of my own? Will anyone remember what I
tried to teach them?

When you encounter the rejects of the
world, remember that God sees their hearts.
I understand why they fall again and again.
Some of them have never known love or praise,
support or friendship. And I also understand
you when you fail to be the person you want to
be. Never forget that I love you.

WE PRAY

Remembering that God is present even in our
darkness and wrongdoing, we forgive ourselves
and others for the harm and injustices done by
us and to us.

*(In silence, pray for those who have hurt you and
allow God's spirit to heal you.)* ☸

8

Jesus
speaks to
the women
of Jerusalem

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STATION EIGHT

JESUS SPEAKS

The men with whom I had shared so much have abandoned me, but these women weep openly for me. Their caring and compassion confirm the truth that we are connected. Pain and sorrow are common bonds.

I mourn for them as they long to see the day when we live as brothers and sisters. They realize that in God's reign we must work together as equals, no one lording power over another. They have believed my message and realize the cost of being faithful to the truth.

WE PRAY

Convinced by the example of Jesus who removed divisions among peoples, we pray to be open to the Spirit's work in everyone.

(In silence, pray for those who accept the challenge to speak of our communion with each other.) ☸

9 Jesus falls the third time

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STATION NINE

JESUS SPEAKS

The soldiers are impatient with me as I fall again. It would be easier to lie here; it would be easier to quit. What good have I accomplished? But somehow I know I must go on. I struggle to stand; I realize I am not alone.

Whenever life tests you to the point of giving up, think of me. I will stay with you as you wrestle with doubt, despair, or hopelessness.

WE PRAY

Like us, Jesus found strength in God's power in his life. We trust that when all seems lost in our life we will rely on that same power to enable us to continue walking in faith.

(In silence, pray for those who may be ready to give in to despair.) ☸

10 Jesus
is stripped of
his garments

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STATION TEN

JESUS SPEAKS

Not only is the pain excruciating as they pull off my clothes, I am humiliated as the onlookers stare at my nakedness. Some mock me; others sneer. But these, too, are loved by my God; will they ever understand?

When your dignity is attacked and when others try to shame you for your faith, do not worry about your reputation. Do not be concerned when others ridicule your efforts to love both friend and enemy.

WE PRAY

Joyful in the freedom that Jesus taught us, we pledge to treat all people as temples of God, treasures in earthen vessels.

(In silence, pray for those who suffer disgrace or discrimination because of intolerance, prejudice, or arrogance.) ☸

11

Jesus is
nailed to
the cross

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STATION ELEVEN

JESUS SPEAKS

The reality of my dying is confirmed with every explosion of agony as the hammer pounds each nail. I cannot escape! How did I become such a threat to the authorities? Yes, I had crowds listening to me, but I taught them only about a loving God and how to respond to that love by caring for others.

Do you find it perplexing that some people like the security of many rules rather than the refuge of a loving God? I think that I upset those who were in charge because I healed people on the Sabbath; I allowed a woman to wash my feet. Those in power must have feared that I would take away all their followers.

WE PRAY

Because Jesus wanted to free people from fear and worked to bring about a new reign of God, they judged him a traitor to their tradition. May we learn to live with confidence in our loving God when we meet unjustified criticism and are wrongly convicted.

(In silence, pray for those who are silenced for their vision and censored for their pursuit of truth.) ☸

12 Jesus
dies on the
cross

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STATION TWELVE

JESUS SPEAKS

I look down and see my mother being comforted by John. I hear the convicts on either side of me. The crowd is yelling with satisfaction as they notice that I am suffocating. O God, my God, where are you? Why have you abandoned me? I hear the jeers, the mocking, the laughing. All goes dark around me; I forgive; I forgive. I still believe, though all seems lost. I still trust—I am dead. The soldier plunges his sword into my side.

(Pause and reflect in silence.)

WE PRAY

Although he was tested by darkness and deprived of God's consolation, Jesus died trusting in God's presence. Because we are the body of Christ, we believe what cannot be seen; we hope for new life; we forgive what is unforgivable.

(In silence, pray for those who are dying at this moment.) ☸

13 Jesus is taken down from the cross

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STATION THIRTEEN

JESUS SPEAKS

My mother's heart is breaking as she holds my lifeless body on her lap. Her grief numbs her faith that I am alive in God; her grief does not allow her to rejoice that I am with her. Tears stream from her eyes as her mind replays images from my childhood.

As her shoulders begin to tremble with her sobs, I put my arms around her. "I will never leave you," I tell her. "You will see me again. We will always be together."

WE PRAY

Reflecting on the death of Jesus and his mother's sorrow, we gain strength and learn to live again. With our wounded hearts we discover again how we are one with all who suffer the anguish of loss.

(In silence, pray for those who are grieving.) ☸

14

The body of Jesus is placed in the tomb

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STATION FOURTEEN

JESUS SPEAKS

As Joseph and Nicodemus carry my body to its tomb, my mother and a few other disciples including Magdalene, follow them. After our Jewish rituals are performed, they leave my perfumed wrapped body, and the women promise to return.

They walk away in silence and my mother is grateful for their friendship. I go with them, rejoicing in the awareness that we are all one in the Divine Presence.

WE PRAY

Knowing that through his death Jesus will be transformed, we rejoice that his resurrection gives birth to a new life beyond our imagining. We give thanks for this truth in our life and in the lives of all whom we love.

(In silence, pray for those who support us in our difficult times.) ☸

FINAL PRAYER.

We remember Jesus who gave such remarkable witness to the Presence of the Divine which he saw everywhere. We thank him for showing us how to live as vessels of the Sacred, connected to all of creation. His living, loving, and dying with such deep faith and hope teach us how to live in love, free from fear of the unknown. We pray that we will be open to the Spirit in our life; we pray that we will follow the example of Jesus; we rejoice in the mystery of God with us. Amen.

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